Newsletter

Alamo Area Atari User Assoc.

1987 Meeting Schedule:

March 27	August 28
April 24	September 25 ← NEXT MEETING!
May 22	October 23
June 26	November 27
July 24	December (TBD)

**Meetings are held at 7:30 in the Cafeteria of
the San Antonio Savings Assoc (SASA) Bldg**

**A.A.A.U.A.
P.O. Box 79 – 1383
San Antonio, Texas
78279 – 1383**

SAN ANTONIO, TX
PM
SEP 22
1987
782

USA 22

To:

SAN LEANDRO COMPUTER CLUB
P.O. BOX 1506
SAN LEANDRO, CA 94577-0374

First Class Mail

The ALAMO AREA ATARI USER ASSOCIATION (AAAUA) is an independent ATARI computer user's association for users of 8-bit ATARI computers. AAAUA is not in any way affiated with ATARI, Inc. nor with any other commercial organization. Meetings are held the fourth Friday of each month at 7:30PM at the San Antonio Savings Association (SASA) cafeteria. SASA is located at 601 N.W. Loop 410 at San Pedro, San Antonio, Texas. Parking is available on the Lockhill-Selma (North) side.

Dues are $24 per year for an individual or family group. Membership includes a subscription to this newsletter and free access to the User's group Public Domain Disk Library, Educational Videotapes, Exchange Newsletters, Demonstrations of 8-Bit Atari related products, and AAAUA owned equipment.

This newsletter is written, assembled and printed by members of the AAAUA using only Atari 8-bit software (except for the mailing cover which is under revision). All articles are donated or reprinted from other newsletters with permission. Any company names, logos or trademarks are used either with permission or in reference to a company or its product. Opinions expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the AAAUA or any other organization. Any article in this newsletter may be reproduced providing proper credit is given to the author and AAAUA unless otherwise noted in the article.

All correspondence including articles and exhange newsletters should be addressed to:

    AAAUA
    P.O. Box 79-1383
    San Antonio, Texas 78279-1383

Articles may also be transmitted by modem either directly or through a BBS E-Mail. The program of preference is ATARIWRITER PLUS, although other formats will be accepted. Call any of the officers for further information.

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                  (512) 344-3522

AAAUA President's Corner

If you still have your AAAUA survey booklet, please bring it to this meeting. I have only received 16 booklets and I would like to publish the results before I leave office in November. The survey results will be based on the booklets that I have in hand at the end of this month's meeting.

Please read the following notice which came about as a result of a meeting on 19 September, to which, the entire AAAUA Executive Committee was invited.

19 SEPTEMBER 1987

NOTICE TO ALL USERS AND
MEMBERS OF RAAUG AND AAAUA!

During the meeting on 19 September, the decision was made to consolidate the existing San Antonio 8-Bit User Groups!

Because of the lack of membership support in contributing to the needs of the various groups, the executive committees have decided to actively pursue this change. This plan will happen unless we receive a sufficient number of written objections from ACTIVE dues-paying members of these Group otherwise, the vote of those members present at the NOVEMF meetings will be binding. This is your only formai notification of this constitutional restructuring unless you attend the club meetings in October & November. If you choose to submit a written response, be sure to include your membership number and expiration date on any correspondence related to this issue. As AAAUA memberships expire one year from date of payment (not every January, like RAAUG), an "ACTIVE" AAAUA member must have an expiration not EARLIER than SEP 87 in order to vote on this issue in the November convention.

This change in Atari 8-Bit User Groups will begin in November, 1987. As with the September 1987 meeting, the November meeting will be a JOINT meeting of RAAUG & AAAUA. The meeting will begin with the ratification of a new constitution and adoption of bylaws, followed by elections of the new officers of the new Group.

Each, group, of course, will conduct its own vote on merging into this new SUPER 8-Bit Atari User Group. Assuming the only REASONABLE result, the change will become effective immediately following these votes.

RAAUG AND AAAUA MEMBERS...BE SURE YOU ATTEND THIS MEETIN'
The new SUPER Group is where the action will be, so come he us make it a smooth transition. Notice will be given before

the elections proceed, as to what written responses were received as of the date of this meeting. When elections begin, you will be electing those officers to represent positions in the "new" combined group. Nominations for the offices are to take place at the October meetings.

Prior to the actual AAAUA and RAAUG votes on 27 November 1987, the new constitution and by-laws will be the subject of discussion. Please contribute to this discussion, as this new group is for you!

Majority rules in this decision. The potential of San Antonio is so great, we can't afford to put this off any longer! If you don't write to us to let us know your feelings (pro -or-con), it will be assumed that you agree 100% with the new group format.

To make the new group viable, we will be changing many things. this includes the name of the group, amount of dues, and most everything that is done when forming a new group. We need !YOUR! input this time! Let everyone know what your desires are so that they can be discussed and placed into reality.

The new group will be an 8-Bit Atari-ONLY User Group. This has absolutely nothing to do with dissent from the -ST- side of the Atari house, but the ST Group has specific interests that don't coincide with 8-Bit interests, and vice versa. We feel that this is fair.

Again, a combined 8-Bit Atari User Group is now forming. Please come to the next 2 meetings to help us set it up! We can't emphasize the fact that you "DO" have a vote, and we need your help in getting it on the road.

If you have paid dues in advance in your current user group, they will be honored in the new group, since all funds should be combined. More on this at the meetings. However, this is a voting matter and if you don't show up, again, we can only conclude that you approve.

If you have something to say between the meetings that you attend, please write to:

NEW ATARI USER GROUP
C/O NETWORK: ATARI
5831 SUN BAY
SAN ANTONIO, TX.
78244

AAAUA
P.O. Box 79-1383
San Antonio, TX 78279-1383

RAAUG
P.O Box 2611
Universal City, TX 78148

Write TODAY! Don't wait! Give us your ideas and desires! But, most of all, come to the meetings and give us the support we need to make your desires a reality.

XM301 WARNING

From the POKEY PRESS! 1987
by Paul Alhart

(Reprinted from ZMAG, #49, 4/27/87)

If you own an XM301 modem, you may own an electronic "Time Bomb". After a rash of hardware failures last month, which included smoking a disk drive and two printer interfaces, I found the cause of my problem to be my XM301. The modem worked fine, but was killing off my system, piece by piece.

The reason has to do with the thirteen wires coming from the serial I/O plug, although only nine wires are actually used by the modem. The other four wires have about 1/8 inch bare wire showing, and are just hanging around, unterminated, waiting to touch something they shouldn't. I have checked other XM301 modems and this condition existed in them too.

Here is what to do immediately:

With all power off, remove the two screws from the bottom of the modem and lift off the plastic case. Inspect the wires where they enter the modem. You will find that four of the wires are not connected to anything. If these wires have any bare metal showing, cut it off. Be careful to keep the cut-off pieces from falling into the modem. Next, tape each wire individually, so that it cannot possibly touch any other wires or parts in the modem. Put the modem back in its case, replace the screws, and you are done. I have written to Atari regarding this problem but have not received a reply as yet.

[Note: This may be an isolated problem, but when I checked my modem I found bare wires looking for trouble. I found heat shrink tubing worked best. If you own an XM301, I highly recommend checking for this potential disaster now!-ZMAG Ed.]

THE STAR MICRONICS NX-10
by N. Van Dost Jr.-JACG

Although my Centronics 739 is still chugging along, I just
went out and bought an NX-10. The reason, super graphics and
great print. My shopping was done at the Meadowlands Computer
Show. Prices were competitive, and ranged from $229 to $189.
Towards the middle of the show, most dealers tried to match
the $189 price. The Centronics to Atari 850 cable was
obtained from another dealer for $10.

Naturally, I couldn't wait to get the box open and start
printing. The box contained a sheet on unpacking your
printer. I highly advise reading this first, as it tells of
the three shipping spacers which have to be removed before
you power up. Also enclosed were a manual, 239 pages and a
plastic user's guide for the control panel operation.

The front panel consists of; ON LINE, PAPER FEED, MODE, BOLD,
and power indicator. The power indicator glows orange when
the power is on or blinks when the printer is out of paper or
some other error occurs. The BOLD key and indicator selects
boldface printing. The draft indicators (80,96,136)-glows
green to indicate the number of characters per line when the
printer is in the draft mode (set by the MODE key). NLQ
indicator glows green when the printer is printing in Near
Letter Quality mode (set by the MODE key). Paper feed key
advances the paper one line at a time (On-Line indicator off)
and consecutive lines when held down. Online key and
indicator sends a signal to the computer when it can or
cannot accept data.

Features available during Off-Line after power up are;
Micro-feeding, forward and reverse, Form-feeding, and Margin
setting. Features available while turning on the power are;
Self test (two different), Hex dump mode, Panel mode, Italic
mode, and Italic panel mode.

The printer has an easy to install ribbon cartridge which
sells in the $8.00 range. Both pin and tractor feed are
standard. If you are one of those persons, like me, who uses
mostly single sheets in their printer, you'll fall in love
with the Automatic Paper Loader. Just set the sheet on the
tray and move the release lever to the front most position
and BINGO, your sheet is loaded.

Under the ribbon on the left are two sets of DIP switches, so
you can match your printer to computer. Some functions are:
Enable download characters, 8 different international
character sets, standard and IBM mode, page length, paper
length, and auto linefeed with carriage return.

The user's manual is well written, with many examples to help
you get the most out of your printer. There's not much m
that I can say in praise of the NX-10, except I compared a
NLQ letter I printed against the print from one of the IBM
Selectrics at work and it was hard to tell which one was the
STAR.

ANTIC Copyright Policy!
(Reprinted from the May '87 issue of the Eugene ACE
Newsletter.)

by Leo Newman, HELP BBS Sysop (316) 683-7514

I hope this article will be published by other user groups
nationwide. I think it is time we encourage a letter writing
campaign to "Antic Magazine", much the same way as they
encouraged us to do so in an effort to get more 8 bit
software produced by Electronic Arts a couple of years ago.

As many of you may know, I run the HELP BBS, a purely PUBLIC
DOMAIN BBS. It is extremely difficult to find good quality
PUBLIC DOMAIN software for our computers on a regular basis.
"ANTIC MAGAZINE", prior to April of 1984 did not claim
copyrights to their software printed as type-in programs in
their magazine. But, in an attempt to force users to type
their programs or buy their DISK issues, has decided they
exclusive rights by virtue of copyright to their programs.

I can certainly understand their claiming copyright laws to
their programs. This should only be expected. However, they
refuse to allow these programs to be placed on any type of
PUBLIC ADDRESS BBS for downloading or to be placed in any
club library without prior written permission. Having been
refused by virtue of not receiving an answer to my request, I
assume no one is going to get such permission. Supporting
this conclusion is the fact their EDITOR wrote to the MACE
Club and demanded all ANTIC programs be removed from their
BBS under penalty of law.

Some of you may know that ANTIC is a member of the SPA,
Software Producers of America. The forming of this
organization was to track down and prosecute BBS's around the
country who were placing commercial software on their systems
for downloading. I heartily agree with their idea and support
them fully, being a software producer myself. However, I do
not see why ANTIC MAGAZINE can't adopt the same practice as
ANALOG MAGAZINE of allowing their programs to be placed on
public BBS's and in Club libraries in the month the magazine
was printed for.

I want to point out ANALOG MAGAZINE also sells Disk issu
so there is a possible loss of revenue for them as well as

ANTIC. I also have to admit I am tired of reading the IO
column (reader feedback) in ANTIC and seeing them hype their
programs. I can't blame them for wanting to make money, but
what is their CATALOG for?

For those who want to write to ANTIC MAGAZINE, please address
your letters to the attention of:

James Capparell
c/o Antic Magazine
624 Second Street
San Francisco, CA 94107

In your letter be sure to indicate you feel Antic should
allow their type-in programs to be placed on BBS's and in
club libraries in the same manner as their most fierce
competitor, ANALOG MAGAZINE. Maybe with this type of input
they will see past the dollar sign of selling a DISK issue
into the future of retaining their readership!

I want other clubs to pick up this article and reprint it in
their newsletter! We need more than one voice to get a
response. We did it once before when ANTIC cried for our
help! Now we would like to see the same cooperation from
ANTIC!

WRITE TODAY!!!

Editor's Note: I believe Antic has always copyrighted their
original programs. Some confusion might be caused because
ANTIC for many years included many public domain programs in
their type-in listings. The right to distribute those public
domain programs from ANTIC never has extended to their
copyrighted programs. If a copyright holder permits
distribution of a program by a BBS to anyone who calls, the
copyright will be lost forever. The only way they can
maintain their copyright is to prohibit such copying. ANTIC
may well have contracts with authors of copyrighted materials
which can be violated by ANTIC either permitting or
acquiescing in the distribution of those programs by
BBS's.--JB (ACE)

--- End of Reprint ----

ANTIC recently dropped the price of its DISK subscription
from $99.95 to $79.95 per year, and from $12.95 to $5.95 per
single issue disk. -Ed

WAS IBM THE FIRST?
by Al Sherrill

If you're thinking about computers, I don't believe anyone
would claim they were the first. Depending on how you define
"computer", the origin goes back dozens to hundreds or
thousands of years. But IBM may have another distinction(?).

There are many examples of the consumer public taking a trade
name and applying it generically to other similar products.
For example, "Kleenex" is frequently used to refer to any
facial tissue; "Xerox" likewise is applied to many
duplication processes, and "JELLO" for any gelatin desert.
But how many examples of the reverse can you think of; i.e. a
generic term applied to a specific product by the
manufacturer? It seems IBM has done this when they named
their personal computer a "PC". Then later, as you know,
COMMODORE and ATARI both followed suit and came out with
their "PC". But, was IBM the first?

It indeed would be strange to hear of a CAR car, or a HOUSE
house, or a SHOE shoe. But no one seems to notice when IBM et
al refer to their products as PC pc's. Now don't get me
wrong, I think IBM is a fine company with a great reputation.
As the saying goes, "no one ever got fired for buying an IBM
system". And, likewise I believe that both COMMODORE and
ATARI are great machines and much better than is generally
acknowledged. (I'll let you guess my favorite.) But it still
seems a little strange to me to see a generic name applied to
their products.

Of course, up to this point, this article has been a little
"tongue in cheek". But what does aggravate me is when many of
the tech writers fall right in line when they write about
personal computers or personal computer software. One has to
read through most of the article in order to determine what
system they are referring to only to surmise (by various
clues in the article) that they are writing about the IBM PC
and not some other system. Are these people unaware that
there are other personal computer systems? I can't believe
that! Are they ignorant of the capabilities of other
computers? This could be the case but still difficult to
understand. After all, they must know something about
computers and the computer market, mustn't they? Could it be
that they are biased? What would be the motivation for that?
Could it be that the belief that the ATARI is only a game
machine invaded the thinking technical mind? What could cause
them to apparently conclude that the IBM is the only system
in existance? I think that it is absolutely inexcusable for
an independant professional technical writer to make such an
unfounded assumption. Perhaps they have fallen prey to belief
by many that the other machines are either just toys or game
machines. This is difficult for me to understand in face of
overwhelming evidence to the contrary. Perhaps "Advertising"
(or the lack of it) is partially to blame. But, isn't it sad
that so many people unquestionably accept what others write
without engaging brain? But if that's the way it is, then
maybe it would be good for everybody if ATARI (and some of

the other companies producing good products) as well as <u>all</u> of us did a little more "shouting from the roof-tops". I still get a little agitated when I hear people make uninformed remarks about the "game machine company" that went out of business." Grrr. Oh well, I guess I'll break and go have some SOUP soup with CRACKER crackers.

Interview conducted by Ron Kovacs of Zmagazine with Chuck Leazott from Network: Atari Hard Disk User Group
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RON: Good day Sir, Please tell our readers about the HDUG, and why you started this User Group?

MRZ: OK, (DEEP BREATH). HDUG (HARD DISK USER GROUP) IS DESIGNED AROUND SYSOPS THAT HAVE THE YEARNING TO OPERATE A HARD DRIVE WITH THE ATARI COMPUTERS.

IT'S REALLY FOR EVERYONE WISHING TO RUN A HD, BUT ARE AFRAID TO START DUE TO A LACK OF KNOWLEDGE.

WE STARTED THE GROUP AS A RESULT OF A CONVERSATION WITH TOM HARKER AT ICD. SINCE THEY ARE NOW SUPPORTING HD'S, WE NEEDED A PLACE TO COORDINATE ALL THE HD ACTIVITY. THUS, HDUG WAS BORN. I HAVE TO GIVE CREDIT WHERE CREDIT IS DUE, AND IT WAS REALLY TOM'S IDEA. SINCE HE DIDN'T REALLY HAVE THE TIME, I TOOK IT UPON MYSELF TO GOPHER IT.

RON: Were you running a BBS system before HDUG existed?

MRZ: YES, I HAD A SIMPLE SYSTEM (STARTED WITH AMIS, OF ALL THINGS).

AFTER TALKING TO TOM, I BOUGHT A HD.

I'VE BEEN INTO BBS'N SINCE 1982, AND STARTED WITH A SINGLE 1050 (AND "NO" RAMDISK). USING ATARI DOS 3.0 DIDN'T REALLY TICKLE ME.

RON: I know what you mean!!! What would a perspective HD user get out of joining this user group?

MRZ: WELL, IT DEPENDS ON A LOT OF THINGS. THE NEWSLETTER IDEA IS A DEVICE SETUP TO SPREAD NEWS ON HD SYSTEMS, AND THE HOW'S, WHERE'S, AND EVEN WHY'S OF USING A HARD DRIVE RATHER THAN A FLOPPY/RAMDISK COMBINATION.

YOU HAVE TO REALIZE THAT IN THE FIRST PLACE, YOU HAVE TO HAVE $$$ TO GET THE HD, BUT IT DOESN'T HURT FOR TOO LONG.

RON: Sounds interesting, How about some information for membership instructions.

MRZ: SURE... WE CHOSE A VERY LOW COST FOR MEMBERSHIP. IT TAKES QUITE A BIT OF TIME TO GET THE DATA TOGETHER FOR THE NEWSLETTER (YOU KNOW ALL ABOUT THAT PART), AND PRINTING COSTS ARE NO PICNIC. SO, $18 FOR A 1 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION TO THE NL SOUNDED REASONABLE. THE NL IS CURRENTLY A QUARTERLY, AND SEEMS TO BE GETTING OFF ON THE RIGHT TRACK.

FOLKS CAN JOIN HDUG BY WRITING TO:

NETWORK: HDUG
5831 SUN BAY
SAN ANTONIO, TX
78244

WE ASK THAT YOU PLEASE INCLUDE ANY DATA THAT YOU WISH TO HAVE INSERTED IN THE NL. THINGS LIKE LOCAL BBS'S AND USER GROUPS. ALSO, IF YOU HAVE A HARD DRIVE SETUP, WE WOULD REALLY LIKE TO KNOW WHAT COMPONENTS IT CONSISTS OF.

RON: Talking about components, Do you include both 8-bit and 16-bit in your group?

MRZ: YES. IF YOU SUPPORT ATARI, WE SUPPORT YOU. ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING THAT ATARI EQUIPMENT CAN HANDLE IN THE HARD DISK INDUSTRY WE WANT TO KNOW ABOUT. ALL INPUTS COME F' THE MEMBERS OF THE GROUP. IF YOU DON'T TELL US, WE DO' KNOW.....YET.

RON: What other offers are available to members?

MRZ: OH, THERE ARE MANY DISCOUNTS ON PRODUCTS FROM LOTS OF FOLKS. ONCE WE ESTABLISH "RELATIONSHIPS" WITH COMPANIES, WE USUALLY CAN GET SOME FORM OF DISCOUNT ON HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE FOR THE HD SYSTEMS. FOR EXAMPLE, THERE ARE 2 NEW "BACKUP" UTILITIES DESIGNED TO HELP THE HARD CORE USERS BACKUP THEIR SYSTEMS TO FLOPPY AND HD.

FLASHBACK! AND HARDBACK (FROM ICD AND ORION MICRO SYSTEMS, RESPECTIVELY) ARE OFFERED TO MEMBERS WITH AT A SUBSTANTIAL DISCOUNT. ALSO, HARWARE IS OFFERD AT A DISCOUNT.

RON: I have received and read a few messages on the Zmag BBS about users looking for hard disk information and hard disk repair. Does your group assist with helping members or offering members repair information or a service?

MRZ: WELL, YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE HARD DISK USER GROUP IS UNIQUE IN THE RESPECT THAT IT'S TOTALLY A "MAIL-ORDER" USER GROUP.

ANY CORRESPONDENCE IS ON MODEMS AND BBS'S THAT HELP SUPP US...LIKE YOUR SYSTEM. SO, WHEN A MEMBER HAS PROBLEMS OR QUESTIONS, WE CAN LEAD THEM TO THE RIGHT PLACE (AND CHEAPEST)

TO GET THE PROBLEM SOLVED.

SOME THINGS WE CAN HANDLE IN THE MESSAGE BASES BUT OTHERS, OF COURSE, HAVE TO BE REFERED.

RON: What companies would you suggest (Hard Disks) for new hard disk buyers?

MRZ: HMMM...THAT'S TOUCHY, SINCE I DEAL WITH A LOT OF DIFFERENT PLACES AND DON'T LIKE PLAYING FAVORITES (EVEN THOUGH I HAVE SOME). BUT, LET'S SEE...ICD IS ONE COMPANY THAT WILL RESEARCH PROBLEMS WITH SYSTEMS THEY SELL, AND OTHER SYSTEMS THAT YOU HAVE. LURIE AND ASSOCIATES HANDLE THEIR NEW "BTL" HD SYSTEMS, AND OF COURSE THERE'S ALWAYS SEAGATE, INC., WHICH REALLY KNOWS THE IN'S AND OUT'S OF THE "THEORY" BEHIND HD SYSTEMS.

RON: Sounds like a lot of work for a new hard disk buyer.

I suppose you would suggest an MIO to your future HD buyers, are there any other interfaces available to Atari users?

MRZ: WELL, AGAIN...I HAVE MY FAVORITES, BUT THERE ARE NUMEROUS SYSTEMS TO USE. SUPRA HAS AN INTERFACE DESIGNED FOR BOTH ATARI 8/16 BIT SYSTEMS. THE BTL IS USEFUL, AND IS QUITE SIMILAR TO ICD'S MIO INTERFACE. SINCE I HAVE AN MIO, I HAVE SAY THAT IT'S PERFECT FOR MY NEEDS.

I'M NOT SURE WHAT THE DRIVE SPEC CAPACITY IS ON THE OTHER COMPANIES' INTERFACES, BUT USING SPARTADOS AND THE MIO WILL ALLOW A PERSON TO RUN A WHOPPING 128 MEGABYTES ON A $59.95 8-BIT ATARI COMPUTER WITHOUT A BIT OF TROUBLE. I RUN 120 MEGS.

RON: Before we terminate this interview, what features are available on the Network Atari BBS and what are the future plans for HDUG?

MRZ: WELL, WE'RE IN THE MIDDLE OF A CONFLICT HERE AT NETWORK... WE HAVE TO MAKE EVERYONE HAPPY, WHICH IS OUR BUSINESS, BUT TRYING TO FIND THE BEST BBS PROGRAM TO LET US USE ALL 120 MEGS ON-LINE IS A CHORE. CURRENTLY, LIKE YOURSELF, WE RUN THE OASIS BBS (SORRY KEITH AND EVERYONE ELSE).

THIS ALLOWS US TO HAVE ALL OUR D/L'S ON-LINE AT ONCE. KEITH LEDBETTER WILL SOON BE RELEASING A NEW VERSION OF THE 850 EXPRESS! BBS, AND WE ARE SLATED TO DO THE BETA TESTING SHORTLY. AS A MATTER OF FACT, I'LL BE DOING AN INDEPTH INTERVIEW WITH KEITH THIS COMING SATURDAY ABOUT THIS NEW SYSTEM.

WE'LL KNOW MORE AT THAT TIME. NOT TO DRAG ON, BUT I LIKE

TO BE SURE THAT EVERYONE KNOWS THAT I SUPPORT "ANY" BBS THAT SUPPORTS ATARI. IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE HDUG NEWSLETTER WE'LL HAVE A COMPLETE REVIEW OF MOST OF THE POPULAR BBS'S, AND PIT THEM TOGETHER. YOU DECIDE WHICH SYSTEM SUITS YOU BEST.

RON: (Last question)

Do you have information about ICD news for the months ahead, and expectations on the user group?

MRZ: WELL, I CAN SAY THAT AFTER SPEAKING WITH THE CREW AT ICD, THEY EXPECT TO RELEASE ALL THE NEW PRODUCTS IN A MAD RUSH. I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT IT WILL BE BEFORE CHRISTMAS, BUT DON'T TAKE THAT WRONG. I ASKED TOM IF THEY WERE WAITING FOR THE XMAS RUSH, AND HE SORTA CHUCKLED AND SAID ABSOLUTELY NOT. ONE OF THE SLATED PRODUCTS, SPARTADOS 4 ELITE, HAS BEEN CANCELLED, BUT THEY WILL TAKE ALL THOSE FILES AND PROBABLY INCLUDE THEM INTO THE "TOOLS" DISK.

THIS SOUNDS TERRIFIC, AND I'VE SEEN SOME OF THOSE TOOLS IN ACTION AT THE ICD OFFICE. WE CAN EXPECT TO BE TREATED WITH AN ARMLOAD OF THINGS THAT WE'VE ALL BEEN PATIENTLY WAITING FOR.

AS FOR THE HARD DISK USER GROUP, I'M WORKING ON SOME "TOOLS" MYSELF, AND HAVE ENLISTED THE PROGRAMMING EFFORTS OF ONE OF THE "SLEEPER" PROGRAMMERS IN THE 8-BIT COMMUNITY. DON PEASLEY IS HIS NAME, AND YOU CAN ALL REST ASSURED THAT YOU'LL BE HEARING MANY EXCITING THINGS FROM HIM.

RON: Ok... Please give us your Network: Atari BBS NUmber and address again for those who probably read on past it.

MRZ: SURE..

        NETWORK: ATARI
        5831 SUN BAY
        SAN ANTONIO, TX.
        78244

VOICE: 512-662-9764
MODEM: 512-662-9765 (ANY TIME/BAUD)

NOTE: TO ALL YOUR READERS... PLEASE DON'T CALL MY VOICE NUMBER AT 3AM THINKING IT'S THE BBS. HEH.

RON: Ok Chuck, I want to thank you for this interview. I hope we have covered a few of the important aspects and will be calling on you after the release of your next newsletter.

MRZ: WELL THANX A MEG, AND I'D LIKE TO RAMBLE TO YER READERS FOR JUST A SEC. DO YOU MIND?

RON: Not at all!!!!

MRZ: OK, LET'S ME SAY THAT STARTING A HARD DISK SYSTEM FOR THE ATARI SYSTEMS, OR ANY SYSTEMS, CAN BE A TRYING THING. IT'S NOT SOMETHING THAT IS DONE EASILY, BUT ONCE YOU GET INTO IT IT'S REALLY PHUN! DON'T BE INFLUENCED BY OTHERS THAT HAVE HAD "TROUBLE" WITH THEIR SYSTEMS. GET THE FACTS.

DO IT SMART. GET ALL THE DETAILS "BEFORE" YOU BUY YOUR PRODUCTS. BECAUSE, ONCE YOU'VE INVESTED "MEGGA" BUCKS IN YOUR SYSTEM, YOU ARE STUCK WITH IT. LOOK AROUND. SHOP. SEE WHAT ALL THE RUCKUS IS ABOUT. DON'T BE HASTY IN THE PRODUCTS YOU PURCHASE. FIND A DEPENDABLE COMPANY THAT WILL REALLY "SUPPORT" YOUR HARD EARNED MONEY.

LASTLY, CALL ME... I'LL FIX YOU UP WITH ALL THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO HAVE.   ..

THANKS FOR THE TIME, AND A TIP OF THE HAT TO ANYONE THE BUYS ATARI!!   -

RON: Chuck, Thanks again. Good luck with the group.

MRZ: THANK YOU RON, HOPE ALL THE HDUG EFFORTS DON'T CRASH!! CHOW.

FINI


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*****************************
*                           *
*    DOS 2.0/2.5 OPTIONS    *
*    Compiled from GLITCH   *
*     Feb. 1987, Vol #2     *
*    Compiled by "SNOOPY"   *
*                           *
*****************************
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This is a complete description of the available DOS options under standard ATARI DOS 2.0S and 2.5.

Also included are helpful notes to get you through the rough spots, as if there were some.

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A. DISK DIRECTORY: This option allows you to see which programs are stored on a disk. The drive number can be specified (1-4 for DOS 2.0 users or 1-8 for DOS 2.5 users

with a RAMDISK.COM program). Be sure to type a colon (after the drive number, or all you will see is the number of free sectors left on disk drive 1.   NOTE: If   you accidentally hit ";" instead of ":", the same result will appear.

The use of Wild Cards is helpful. An asterisk (*) tells the computer to look for anything that matches, for example: MYFILE*.*. This will find "ANY" filespec that has "at least" the name =MYFILE= in it. Wild cards can be used in both the 8 character filename and the 3 character extender.

For instance, using "A*.BAS", the computer would list all files that start with an "A" and have the ".BAS" extender. Typing just the drive number, colon and hitting return at the "DIRECTORY-SEARCH SPEC, LIST FILE?" prompt will list all files on specified disk. Just hitting return will select drive 1.

Another wildcard is the "?", and replaces any "single" character in the filename or extender. Like:

 MYFILE?.* will find such files as   MYFILE1.BAS, MYFILES.COM...etc.

B. RUN CARTRIDGE: Choosing this option will return t computer to whatever cartridge is plugged into the machine. If no cartridge is present, it will go to the built-in BASIC (on XLs and XEs). If the machine was booted with the OPTION key held down, Basic is disabled and you will be told that no cartridge is present. Don't try to insert a cartridge after the machine is already on. This will cook either the cart or the computer.

C. COPY FILE: This option will copy a file from one disk drive to another, or from one filename to another on the same drive. Wild cards can be used in the same way as with the A option, but SHOULD NOT be used on the destination filename. If wild cards are used, the file will (should) have the same name on the new disk as it did as on the old one. If no wild cards are used, you have to give the name the program will be saved under on the new disk.

Example: "1:ATARI.BAS,2:AT.BAS" will copy the file ATARI.BAS from disk drive 1 to disk drive 2, where it will be called AT.BAS. The use of wild cards will allow multiple files to be copied. If you are going to copy programs on a one-drive system, use the "O" DUPLICATE FILE option and simply follow the prompts given.

D. DELETE FILE(S): Files can be deleted or erased from a floppy disk by using this option. Be sure you do not want

e file before using this option. Wild cards can be used to do multiple deletions, however BEWARE of the dreaded "*.*"! This will erase the entire disk. You'll normally be prompted before each deletion takes place. A program called DISKFIX.COM, available with DOS 2.5, can recover deleted files as long as another file has not been saved over the same space.

E. RENAME FILE: Allows you to change the name of a file on a floppy disk. Wild cards cannot be used here. Enter the disk drive number, colon, old filename, comma and the new filename like so:

   1:ATARIFUN.BAS,2:BASICFUN.BAS.

                    ..

F. LOCK FILE: Locks/protects a file so that it cannot be erased, written over, or renamed. This option will not protect a file from being deleted if you format the floppy disk (See option I). Wild cards can be used with this option.

UNLOCK FILE: Will unlock a file. Wild cards can be used e as well.

H. WRITE DOS FILE(S): Will write new DOS files (DOS.SYS and DUP.SYS) to a floppy disk. DOS.SYS is the file that tells your computer how to interact with the disk drive. The system cannot be booted with a disk drive that does not have some type of DOS.SYS on it. DUP.SYS is the program that shows your DOS menu. You can delete DUP.SYS to save disk space, but you will not be able to call up the DOS menu unless you use another floppy that has DUP.SYS on it.

I. FORMAT DISK: Be very careful when using this option. When the computer formats a disk, it establishes "sectors" that data is stored in. A disk must be formatted before it can be used. If you format a disk that already has data on it, everything will be lost forever. Always double check which floppy you have in the disk drive before using this option.

Putting a write protection tab over the notch on the side of an important floppy will prevent accidental formatting, and will also prevent any type of writing to the disk. ys label your disks so that you can easily identifiy each and avoid slip-ups.

The only way to set up/format the RAMdisk is with the RAMDISK.COM program. NOTE: DOS 2.5 has two format options.

These options will format in Atari dual density (1010 sectors) as opposed to single density (707 sectors). Do not use this option when using DOS 2.5 on anything other than an Atari 1050 disk drive.

J. DUPLICATE DISK: This option will duplicate the contents of one floppy onto another. This is where RAMdisks are fun to use. DOS 2.5 will automatically format the receiving floppy when duplicating, while you must format the floppy before using this option with DOS 2.0. This option will "NOT" copy PROTECTED SOFTWARE. Only PIRATES (or honest people making legitemate backups) do that! If you are going to be duplicating many floppies, I suggest you obtain a sector copier program, as this duplicating function is rather slow and requires several "swaps" (unless using the RAMdisk).

K. BINARY SAVE: Only machine language programmers need to worry about this option. Simply put, this option copies the contents of a specified portion of computer memory to a disk.

L. BINARY LOAD: Loads a machine language (ML) program from floppy and puts it into memory. The program being loaded will tell the computer where in the memory to put it. If you wanted to run the DISKFIX.COM utility, you would choose "L", and then type "DISKFIX.COM".

Most binary files will have the extenders ".COM", ".EXE", ".OBJ" and ".BIN". In most cases, the .COM and .EXE files are "load and go" files which automatically run themselves once loaded. The .OBJ files are usually loaded and then acted upon by some other program, although this is not always the case. Refer to FINAL NOTE for some commonly used extender names (.EXT's).

M. RUN AT ADDRESS: Runs a ML routine starting at a specified address. Once again, only ML programmers need to concern themselves with this option.

N. CREATE MEM.SAV: This option creates a file called MEM.SAV on the floppy. What MEM.SAV does is save the portion of memory that is needed when you go to the DOS menu. When you return to BASIC (or any other programming cartridge you may be using at the time), the portion of memory used is re-filled out of MEM.SAV.

If you do any file transfers when in DOS, you will be asked if it is okay to use the MEM.SAV program area. If you tell it no, it will do the transfer using only the available empty memory. If you tell it yes, it will have more memory and can

do the file transfer more quickly. However, you will lose
your program because it will have been over-written during
the file transfer.

O. DUPLICATE FILE: Copies a file using only one disk drive.
You will be asked what file to duplicate, and will be
prompted when to swap disks.

P. FORMAT SINGLE (DOS 2.5 only): This will format a disk in
single density (707 sectors). Performs the same task as the
FORMAT DISK option in DOS 2.0. Once again, do not attempt to
format the ramdisk.

A quick note here about single and double density sectors.
Normally, a single density sector is 128 bytes long, and a
double density sector is 256 bytes long.

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* FINAL NOTE *

Here is a partial listing of some of the more common file
extender names (.ext). It is by NO means complete, as new
ones pop up every day.

.COM   Command File (load -n- go)
.BAS   SAVEd Basic
.LST   LISTed Basic
.TXT   ASCII Text (Sometimes .ASC)
.OBJ   Object Code (BINARY)
.SYS   System (Like DOS/DUP/AUTORUN)
.EXE   Executable file
.ASM   Assembler (or MAC/65)
.BIN   Binary (1's and 0's)
.DAT   Program Data File
.FRN   Printer File
.BAT   Batch File
.HEX   Hexidecimal (Numbers)
.FNT   Font (Char/Letter set)
.SRC   Source (Usually Assembler)
.MUS   Music
.DOS   Disk Operating System
.ARC   Archive (Use ARC / ARCX)
.DCM   Diskcomm (Not desirable)
.SCR   Scrunched File
.SCO   SpartaDOS Scopied File
.SHR   Shrunk/Shrink File
.DEM   Demonstration
.DOC   Documentation
.PIC   Koala Pad Pictures
.AMS   Advanced Music System
.BBS   Bulletin Board Utility
.ADV   Adventures

Any time a new type of program is created, along comes
another new extender to learn. Keep your list updated, and
remember these common ones.

.fin